

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Request from the Paducah Independent Board of Education for a waiver of 704 KAR 3:305, Minimum Requirements for High School Graduation, Section 2 (3)(b)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.160 and 704 KAR 5:180

Action Question:

Should the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) grant the Paducah Independent Board of Education's request for a waiver of 704 KAR 3:305, Minimum Requirements for High School Graduation, Section 2 (3)(b)?

History/Background:

Existing Policy. KRS 156.160(2)(a) states: "At the request of a local board of education or a school council, a local school district superintendent shall request that the Kentucky Board of Education waive any administrative regulation promulgated by that board. Beginning in the 1996-97 school year, a request for waiver of any administrative regulation shall be submitted to the Kentucky Board of Education in writing with appropriate justification for the waiver."

Paducah Independent Schools is seeking a waiver of the requirement found in 704 KAR 3:305, Section 2 (3)(b) that states: "A mathematics course or its equivalent as determined by the district shall be taken each year of high school to ensure readiness for postsecondary education or the workforce;"

According to the attached waiver request application that was approved by the Paducah Independent Board of Education, "Paducah Independent Schools has many students who take Algebra 1 in the seventh grade and others who take Geometry during the 8th grade year from a certified math teacher. All of these students are very bright and some want to continue in Math but others want to go in a different direction when they graduate. Many of them, during their junior and senior year at Paducah Tilghman High School, may want to take music, art, foreign language, college classes, etc. in place of the extra math classes."

The district is asking that their students who meet the following criteria qualify for relief from the mathematics every year of high school requirement as follows:

- 1) Students will only be eligible to by-pass a math course in the junior and/or senior year.
- 2) Students must have meet the requirement of 704 KAR 3:305, Section 2(3)(b) that states:

“Mathematics - four (4) courses of mathematics, including three (3) credits that shall include the content contained in the Kentucky core academic standards for mathematics and include the following minimum requirements:

(a) Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. An integrated, applied, interdisciplinary, occupational, or technical course that prepares a student for a career path based on the student's individual learning plan may be substituted for a traditional Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II course on an individual student basis if the course meets the content standards in the Kentucky core academic standards, 704 KAR 3:303;”

- 3) Students must have a reportable score of 24 or higher on the math section of the ACT.
- 4) Students who are granted relief from this requirement shall replace the math course(s) with courses that are identified in the students' Individual Learning Plans as career path courses.

The Paducah Independent Schools agree to keep records showing evidence that these criteria have been met and to make available these records as requested by the Kentucky Board of Education. In addition, the Paducah Independent Schools agree, at the request of the Kentucky Board of Education and after an appropriate length of time, to report the KBE on the postsecondary success of these students.

Staff Recommendation(s) and Rationale(s):

Staff recommends that the KBE approve Paducah Independent's request for a waiver of 704 KAR 3:305, Section 2 (3)(b). These students take some of the required math courses at the middle school level before reaching high school and wish to use these credits to pursue college hours or other areas of interest more relevant to their future careers.

Granting of this waiver will allow students who already perform significantly higher than the College Readiness benchmarks to pursue other courses that align to their career path.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

This type of waiver enables innovation at the local level.

Contact Person:

David Cook, Division Director
Division of Innovation and Partner Engagement
502-564-4201
David.cook@education.ky.gov

Commissioner of Education

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